Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1639 - January 9 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1639 with a release date of Friday, January 9th, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. A 93 year old ham radio operator is murdered in Florida and his son is accused of the crime. Also, the Japan Amateur Radio League and Japan AMSAT say that ham radio may soon be in orbit around the planet Venus, a Transatlantic propagation test in the southern hemisphere and the recession causes postponement of a long awaited D-X operation. The details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1639 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO CRIME: 93 YEAR OLD FLORIDA HAM ALLEGEDLY MURDERED BY HIS SON

The son of a 93 year old Lakeland, Florida ham has been arrested for the murder of his father in a crime that was made to look like a botched home invasion robbery. The body of Walter Farley, K4QE, was found at around 9:15 a.m. at his residence on New Year's day. Amateur Radio Newsline's Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, has been following this fast breaking case and has the details:

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When Walter Farley's bullet-riddled body was found by his 63-year-old son, Robert, inside the home they shared, authorities called it a heinous crime and pledged to pursue any and all leads in a hunt for suspects.

A cash reward was posted and a tip-line publicized for the public to call in any information about the crime anonymously to the Polk County Sheriff's office.

Investigators pursued several avenues, including information that magazine solicitors had been in the neighborhood the night before Walter Farley's body was discovered.

But police were also pursuing another possibility - the possibility that Walter Farley was killed by his own son during some kind of domestic dispute. Inconsistencies in the story Robert initially told detectives on the day his father's body was discovered, coupled with other evidence led to his confession that his father's death was not a random crime.

Detectives say Robert Farley told them he and his wife, Mary, went to a motel in a nearby city to celebrate New Year's Eve. Authorities got video from the hotel security cameras showing that Farley had left the hotel after his wife took a nap earlier in the evening.

Investigators say Robert Farley went home and got into an argument with his father after discussing his intent to divorce his wife. Robert Farley told investigators there was a physical struggle and he shot his father at least four times with a .38-caliber handgun.

Robert Farley admitted he had changed his clothes, took several items from the home to simulate a robbery and drove to a nearby lake to dispose of the murder weapon.

A Polk County dive team recovered it from that lake.

Authorities say Robert Farley had been planning his father's murder for two months.

Local media accounts of the murder quoted neighbors as saying there was nothing to indicate any problems between father and son.

According to published reports, Walter Farley had a career as a telephone and radio repairman and was an Army veteran who served during World War II.

Friends were quoted as saying he had worked for AT&T for about 30 years and bragged about meeting three different presidents while traveling as a repairman aboard Air Force One.

Walter Farley, who was described as an active radio amateur, retired in the early 1980s and he and his wife, Loretta, bought a travel trailer to go on a cross-country road trip.

The couple settled in Dade County, Florida, and in 1992, the published report says, they lost everything when Hurricane Andrew hit.

Loretta died a short time later, but Walter remained active in the community, according to the reports, and continuing his travels to exotic destinations in Europe and South America.

Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd thanked the community and the hotel where Robert Farley had stayed on New Year's Eve for helping to solve the case.

He declared, "Walter Farley did not deserve to die this way."

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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Robert Farley, the elder Farley's son, is now charged with first-degree murder. If tried and convicted he faces a minimum of life in prison without parole. Prosecutors have not yet said if they will seek the death penalty in the case. Walter Farley, K4QE, was a respected member of the Lakeland Amateur Radio Club and was active on several local nets. (ARNewsline(tm) and other sources)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: HAM RADIO TO HEAD TO VENUS

Amateur radio may well be headed to the planet Venus in about 18 months. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reports:

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The Japan Amateur Radio League and Japan AMSAT say that they are collaborating with the Japanese University Space Engineering Consortium. This, to send an amateur radio payload into a Venus transfer orbit next year along with the primary JAXA Planet-C Venus Orbiter mission planned for launch in May of 2010.

The satellite will be called UNITEC-1. It will be developed by the same teams who have already launched cubesats such as the highly successful Tokyo Institute of Technology's CUTE-1.

But the Venus orbital mission will be a bigger challenge because of the special experiments to be included in the mission. First, onboard computers developed by several universities will be tested in the harsh environment of space. This, in the form of a competition to see which of the computers can survive the longest in this radiation-rich area of our solar system.

The bird will also carry and test technologies to receive and decode very weak and low bit rate signal coming from deep space. Lastly will be a system to estimate orbit and signal Doppler shift of the satellite based on received RF signals. This is essential for tracking and receiving communications from such a Venus orbiting satellite..

Now, here's the best part. You too can be a part of this first ever ham radio in space mission to another world. The UNITEC-1 team is inviting radio amateurs all around the world to participate in the receiving and data capture of the latter two experiments.. They note that amateur radio operators working as individuals or in groups can develop stations and techniques to relay their received signal reports and data to the UNITEC-1 control center. They also view this is also a unique opportunity to propose amateur experiments or competitions to the satellite team. One experiment requiring the participation of several amateur radio earth stations will include the development of techniques to combine the received signals from several antennas to improve the received signal to noise ratio from the spacecraft as its outbound from earth.

An exciting ham radio mission to another world, to say the least.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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The UNITEC-1 website will provide the latest mission information. Its in cyberspace at http://unitec-1.cc.u-tokai.ac.jp/en/news_en) (ANS, G3VZV)

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LACK OF PROPAGATION: 2008 AN ALMOST SUN SPOTLESS YEAR.

2008 was a truly low sunspot year. This, according to propagation expert Lee Wical, KH6BZF. Wical told the Ohio Penn DX Newsletter that there were 272 spotless days out of the leap year's 366.

August and December were the worst months with 31 and 28 spotless days, respectively. June and November were the best months with 19 and 15

spotless days. The rest of the months of 2008 were all in the twenties.

And oh yes. For a great profile of Lee Wical, look up KH6BZF on QRZ .com (OPDX)

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HAM RADIO TECHNOLOGY: TRANSATLANTIC TESTS FROM AFRICA TO SOUTH AMERICA

An interesting propagation is about to take place in the southern hemisphere. Flavio Archangel, PY2ZX, reports over the VHF Reflector that there is a portable station being assembled near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This, for dedicated VHF and UHF Transatlantic tests between Africa and South America on the 6 meter, 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands.

Operating as PY2ENO portable PY6, its exact location is Maidenhead grid square GG87xc. It will be operational Monday, January 12th to Saturday the 17th. More information in Spanish is on-line at http://transatlantic.japydx.org (PY2ZX, VHF Reflector)

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HAM RADIO ECONOMY: RECESSION LEADS TO SABLE ISLAND DXPEDITION POSTPONEMENT

The economic meltdown has caused a postponement in the long awaited Sable Island Dxpedition. According to Team Leader Duane Traver, WV2B, due to the current United States economic situation, the DXpedition team has decided to postpone the C-Y-Zero DXpedition planned for 2009.

WV2B says that the group is hopeful to reorganize the DXpedition possibly as early as 2010. In the meantime they have decided to return donations received to date. This, so that the funds can be made available for possible sponsorship of other DX operations this year.

Traver says that any sponsoring organization should feel free to contact him with any questions regarding the matter. He also says that the group is hopeful that their supporters will be willing to renew their sponsorship when the DXpedition can be reorganized. He adds that the sabledx.com website will remain functional for the time being. (WV2B)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the East Cape Linked Repeater Network with systems serving all of South Africa.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TO USE TV CHANNEL 15 FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

The FCC says that it has granted the County of Los Angeles a conditional

waiver. One that permits the use of TV Channel 15 for Public Safety communications. Don Carlson, KQ6FM, reports:

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According to an FCC release, Los Angeles county had filed 57 applications and requests to use 476 to 482 MHz, by waiver, this spectrum for emergency communications. Most stated that the county needed such a grant to allow for a desperately needed expansion of public safety communications in the Los Angeles area. This, in a manner that would promote efficient interoperability among the plethora of public safety agencies serving the region.

In approving the waiver the FCC says that it must consider the Commission's statutory purpose of promoting safety of life and property. Also, that in view of the record, it found persuasive those comments stating that a consolidated UHF system in Los Angeles County would provide a valuable communications resource for the County and local public safety agencies to handle everyday operations, homeland security prevention, protection and response.

The FCC also noted that this enhanced system would also be available to handle natural and man-made disasters effectively and efficiently. This would mean the least amount of lives lost and a minimum amount of property damaged.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM.

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The complete text of the FCC's approval of the STA is at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-08-2823A1.doc   (CGC, FCC)

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CHANGING TECHNOLOGY: DTV CONVERSION COUPON PROGRAM OUT OF MONEY

The government's funding program to help people prepare for the transition to digital television has run out of money. This potentially leaves up to 8 million viewers without discount coupons to buy converter boxes they need to keep their analog TV sets working after the switch to digital.

As of this Sunday, January 4th, consumers who request a $40 coupon to help offset the cost of a converter box are being placed on a waiting list. They may not receive the coupons before February 17th unless they are willing to pay full price for a converter that costs between $80 to $250 depending on a given box's features and what a retailer has priced them at.

Members of Congress are now scrambling to find ways to allocate more money to the program. The big problem is that the nation is facing a monumental deficit, so there may be political opposition to expanding the converter box subsidy program. (TV)

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RADIO LAW: SOME INTERNET MUSIC MAY GO AWAY

The increase in royalties to air music over the Web may force Yahoo and AOL to shutter their Web radio sites. Bloomberg news recently reported that no accord seems to be on the horizon between SoundExchange, which represents major record labels and sought the increase, and other groups. This includes many radio Internet broadcasters. (RW)

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HAM RADIO AND SCOUTING: DARA FORMS SCOUT VENTURING CREW

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association and the Miami Valley Council Boy Scouts of America have teamed up to form a new Scouting Venturing crew. This, to serve the needs of high school age youngsters in the Dayton, Ohio area.

Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for those who are at least age 14, and have completed the eighth grade. This new Dayton Amateur Radio Association sponsored Venturing crew is the only Amateur Radio specialty Scouting group in the Boy Scouts of America Miami Valley Ohio Council. (DARA)

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RADIO EDUCATION: UK CLUB WINS GRANT TO FURTHER HAM RADIO EDUCATION

A United Kingdom radio club is the big winner in a national lottery. The Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society has been awarded a ï¿½10,000 endowment from the 'Awards for All' program that gives grants to local groups.

The grant to the Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society will be used by the club to further develop amateur radio training in the Chelmsford area as well as radio sports and for the establishment of a demonstration station in the Sandford Mill Science and Industry Museum. Among the equipment the club is buying with the grant are transceivers, a linear amplifier and some antennas. Also being purchased are some laptop computers and a video projector to be used in training programs and other projects. (Southgate)

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RADIO EDUCATION: FAR ANNOUNCES 2009 - 20010 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PERIOD

FAR, the Foundation for Amateur Radio has announced that it is now accepting applications for the 48 scholarships it administers for the 2009 through 2010 academic year. This, to aid licensed radio amateurs who are pursuing a higher education.

The foundation funds two of the scholarships and administers 46 others. Hams pursuing a full-time course of study beyond high school and accepted by or enrolled in an accredited university, college or technical school are eligible to apply. Scholarship grants range from $500 to $5000, and preference in some cases goes to applicants living in particular geographical areas or pursuing certain studies. Non-US residents are eligible to apply for some of the scholarships.

The application deadline is May 1, 2009. More information and an application form may be requested by letter via e-mail to scholarships@farweb.org. It can also be obtained by sending a card or note postmarked prior to March 30th to FAR Scholarships, PO Box 831, Riverdale, Maryland, 20738. (FAR)

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SPECIAL EVENT: USS MIDWAY CELEBRATES TWO MILITARY EVENTS

Keep an ear open for special event Station NI6IW that will be operational from the USS Midway radio room on January 10th. The station will take to the ham radio airwaves from 1700 to 0059 UTC. This, to commemorate the commissioning of the world's first nuclear powered ship, the USS Nautilus, and Operation Desert Storm liberating Kuwait .

NI6IW will operate CW, SSB, PSK 31 and RTTY on the H-F bands as well as D-Star via the 145.615 KI6MGN Palomar Mountain repeater. QSL with a self addressed, stamped envelope to the USS Midway Museum Radio Room, 910 North Harbor Drive, San Diego, California, 92101. (W9EN)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: THREE INDUCTED INTO THE NEW ZEALAND DX HALL OF FAME

Kiwi DX'ers have announced the formation of a new New Zealand DX Hall of Fame. This, to honor those outstanding Zed-L DX'ers who have excelled in our radio sport hobby over many years.

The first inductees include Roy Jackson, ZL4BO and Ron Wright, ZL1AMO. Also inducted posthumously was Jock White, ZL2GX. All were honored for their extraordinary and unselfish contribution to the sport of Amateur Radio DXing in New Zealand. (ZL News)

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D-STAR NEWS: AUSTRALIAN DSTAR LIST NOW HAS 233 MEMBERS AND GROWING

There are now 233 radio amateurs world-wide posting to the Australian D-Star list and the number seems to increase every day. Since the introduction of the list earlier this year, membership and site usage has grown drastically. D-Star usage has also shown a marked increase since the introduction of the DV Dongle, giving hams a relatively inexpensive and easy way to gain the benefits of D-Star from home. (D-Star Remailer)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: ORLANDO HAMCATION FEBRUARY 13 - 14

The 2009 ham radio social scene really begins the weekend of February 13th to the 15th. That's when the Orlando Amateur Radio Club holds the 63rd Orlando HamCation Amateur Radio and Computer Show at the Central Florida Fairgrounds in Orlando, Florida.

Over 150 commercial vendors are expected top be there. Also, 400 swap table vendors will be a part of the largest tailgate sales operation in

Florida during the show. This year's HamCation theme will be "Amateur Radio Always a Challenge." And, special event station K4H will be on the air from the site to help commemorate this year's outing.

More information is on-line at www.hamcation.com, or by e-mail to hamcation (at) oarc (dot)org.

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING HAM TECHNOLOGY: A TRANSMITTER FROM A CFL

How would you like to build a transmitter from the remains of one of those compact fluorescent light bulbs? Well one ham has and his work is fast becoming the talk of the Internet. Graham Kemp VK4BB, is here with the details:

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Turn a 'low energy' light bulb into an 80m transmitter!

'Low energy' light bulbs are renowned for causing radio interference but they can be put to good use.   A website describes how to turn one into a transmitter for the Amateur Radio 80m band.

Michael Rainey, AA1TJA's website describes how to convert a compact fluorescent lamp -- in this case a TriMax Electronic Fluorescent Lamp -- into a 1.5 Watt QRP CW transmitter for 3.5 MHz.   Indeed, Michael goes on to say "a perfectly serviceable transmitter may be constructed!

The only additional components required were the quartz crystal, and four of the five components needed for the output low-pass filter. The resulting transmitter produces up to 1.5 Watts on 80m.

More information is on Michael's Website.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Graham Kemp, VK4BB, reporting from Brisbane, Australia.

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A few words of caution regarding the handling those compact fluorescent lamps or any fluorescent lamps for that matter. The glass section of these lamps contain some pretty toxic chemicals that you will really not want to come in contact with. Also, be very careful to avoid shattering the glass as its very easy to suffer a deep gash from the shards and find yourself in

a hospital emergency room as a result. That said, a link to the website that Graham refers to can be
at http://mjrainey.googlepages.com/dasderelicht (Southgate, WIA News)

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RADIO IN SPACE: NEW LUNAR PHOTOS FROM THE 1960'S

Efforts are being made to retrieve pictures made by the Lunar Orbiter spacecraft in 1966 and 1967. For those of us old enough to remember, back in the late 1960's NASA sent five Lunar Orbiter missions to photograph the surface of the moon. The purpose of these probes was to gain a better understanding of the lunar environment in advance of the Apollo program. Back then, data was radioed back to Earth where it was first recorded on large magnetic tape reels. It was then decoded and transferred to photographic film for scientific analysis. When these images were first retrieved from lunar orbit, only a portion of their true resolution was available because of the limited technology available at the time.

NASA has now released a newly restored 42-year-old image of Earth. The Lunar Orbiter 1 spacecraft took the iconic photograph of Earth rising above the lunar surface in 1966. Using modern digital technology, NASA has now produced the image at a much higher resolution than was possible when it was originally taken. To view the image and for more information about the Lunar Orbiter Image Recovery Project,
visit http://www.nasa.gov/topics/moonmars/features/LOIRP) (NASA)

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WORLDBEAT: IRELAND TESTS ITS EAS SYSTEM

Turning to news from around the world, word that Ireland has tested its version of the Emergency Activation System. On the 16th of December at 4:45AM local time, the Irish Department of Communications carried out a structured exercise to test the nation's broadcast emergency services alert system.

Early that morning, all television and radio channels carried a 30 second engineering test simultaneously across Ireland. The four terrestrial broadcasters, regional broadcasters, all national radio channels and the 25 local radio stations carried an announcement indicating that the test was being conducted and that normal programming would resume as soon as it was concluded.

The drill was designed to simulate an urgent requirement of the government or an emergency service provider to have access to radio and TV broadcast platforms as fast as possible in order to broadcast information to the public. This is the first time such an exercise has ever been carried out in Ireland. (IRTS)

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ON THE AIR: THE SOUND OF HEAVY IRON ON 75

If you are interested in hearing some good heavy metal AM signals the way

that they used to sound on the ham bands, then this is for you. Hams nationwide are invited to tune in to the mid-West based 3.868 MHz Noontime AM Forum. The net meets Monday through Friday at 12 noon Central US time. Net control is K9ACT in Marengo, Illinois, and the net gives anyone with A-M gear a chance to test that equipment under real life operating conditions. (KB9YGD)

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ON THE AIR: CANADIAN HAMS CELEBRATE GALILEO

Canadian hams will be permitted to use a special sequence old prefixes through February 28th. This to commemorate Galileo's first use of an optical telescope and the subsequent discoveries he made in his lifetime. For Canadian hams wanting to take part, the special prefixes work this way: VE changes to CG: VA changes to CF; VO changes to CH and VY changes to CI. Event planners say that they hope the calls will also promote the International Year of Astronomy. (Southgate)

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DX

In DX, word that The ARRL DXCC Desk has approved credit for the T61AA operation from Afghanistan. This, after the license for the operation was updated. If you had cards that were recently rejected for this operation, please send an e-mail to the ARRL DXCC Desk and you will be placed on the list for credit update.

G7COD will be operational January 11th to the 27th from the Island of Embudu in the Kaafu Atoll. This, using the callsign 8Q7AK. Activity will be CW and SSB on 40-10 meters including 30, 17 and 12 meters. For comprehensive details on QSL information please check 8Q7AK on QRZ dot com.

OZ8KR will be active as C56KR from Bakuto, Gambia through January 14th. Listen for him on 40 though 10 meters on SSB only. QSL via his home callsign.

G3ZVW will be operational as ZD8N from Ascension Island from January 12th to the 27th. He will be using CW, RTTY and SSB mainly on 30 through 10 meters. QSL direct or via the bureau.

EA5GVH will be on the air from Aruba as P40PZ from January 12th to the 28th. He will operate 80 through 6 meters using SSB and the digital modes only. QSL via EA5GVH.

HB9CRV has announced that as of December 31st, 2008, he is no longer the QSL manager of CT3BX. No new QSL Manager has been found and the logs are closed.

Lastly, G3NKC, G4XUM and MD0CCE will be active as MD4K from the Isle of Mann during the CQ 160-Meter CW Contest. That's January 24th to the 25th. The trio will operate as a Multi-Op entry. QSL via G3NKC and be sure to include sufficient return postage with your QSL request.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE MOUSE AT 40

And finally this week, it's the 40th birthday of a neat little device that makes it easy to work and play at your computer. Here's Jim Linton, VK3PC:

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Just imagine a personal computer without a mouse? That may very well happen in a few years time but more about that later.

The first public demonstration of a mouse was by the Stanford Research Institute in San Francisco California on 9 December 1968.

At an event attended by 1,000 computer professionals the mouse made its debut, shown off by Douglas Engelbart and his team of fellow researchers. It looked like a real mouse in shape and its attached cord resembling a tail led to it gaining its name.

Four years later, Bill English developed the 'ball mouse,' replacing the external wheels on the original mouse with a single ball that could rotate in any direction. It was first sold with the Zerox Alto computer in 1981.

In more recent years, wireless technology enabled the ubiquitous mouse to lose its tail. There are now predictions that within five years the mouse will be obsolete, being replaced by touch screen and facial recognition technology.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Linton, VK3PC.

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The mouse has taken on many roles over the years and its been seen in many situations. Perhaps the funniest was in the Star Trek movie "The Voyage Home." That's where the cast goes back in time to San Francisco in the 1990's to find a pair of hump back whales key to saving the future Earth. Scotty has need of a computer and all that's available is a neat little Mac. Well, Scotty is used to giving verbal commands to his computer and is not sure what to do with the mouse. So, he picks it up, looks at it and then uses it as a microphone to try to talk to the little Mac. And, as those who saw the movie know, the Mac never responds. (WIA News)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline (at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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